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Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/038,240	GEHRKE, JON C.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Huong Q. Pham	3764	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--
 All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the amendment filed on 2/10/2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 20 and 24-32.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on _____ are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 - * Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____. |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____. |

DETAILED ACTION

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The closest art in this case are the patents to Marlow et al, Treutelaar, Price, Blatt, Monila, Haskel and Spencer.

As for claims 20 and 32, prior art does not teach the structure as recited in combination with a sling assembly and a tongue formed between a first groove and a second groove (with structure connected to the connector as recited), the tongue having a raised portion near the second end of the tongue, the raised portion being adapted to frictionally engage the inside surface of the first base or the inside surface of the second base when the tongue is released from a tensioned position thereby allowing the raised portion of the tongue to contact the inside surface of the first base or the inside surface of the second base when the connector is inserted into the first base or the second base.

As for claims 24, 30 and 31, prior art does not teach the structure as recited in combination with a sling assembly and a T-connector having a base portion and a perpendicular portion, the base portion of the T-connector being adapted to allow insertion of the second end of the horizontal frame such that the T-connector rotates freely about the horizontal frame, and the base portion of the T-connector defining a second pair of opposing apertures adapted such that the second pair of opposing apertures can be aligned with the first pair of opposing apertures in the horizontal frame, the perpendicular portion of the T-connector defining a hollow space to receive the

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second end of the connector, and a pin adapted to slide into and pass through the first pair of opposing apertures in the horizontal frame and the second pair of opposing apertures in the base portion of the T-connector to secure the T-connector in a desired position relative to the horizontal frame.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

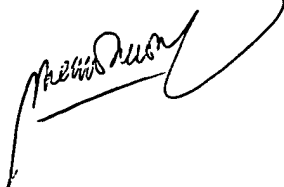
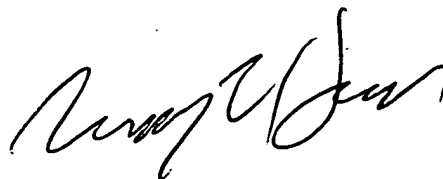
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Huong Q. Pham whose telephone number is (571) 272-4980. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30 AM - 3:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gregory Huson can be reached on (571) 272 - 4887. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

March 9, 2005

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael D. Ryan", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory L. Johnson", written in a cursive style.

GREGORY L. JOHNSON
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700